



Annual Report 2022

**Speaking up for ourselves and
breaking down barriers**

Introduction

Our Way Self Advocacy 2021/2022



A message from Our Way's Manager

Following the last two difficult years coping with the Covid pandemic, it has felt like life has gradually gone back to normal. All our social events have been face to face. People have become much more confident about going out and spending time with their friends.

We used our Lottery Awards For All funding, to plan events celebrating the Queen's platinum jubilee. Our June Summer Ball at the Town Hall had a royal theme and a sightseeing trip to London was enjoyed by all.

Early in the year our Art Project group got creative in the Wyre Forest making charcoal, clay figures, and land art. The project finished with a fabulous exhibition at Kidderminster Town Hall. Thanks to Barbara Miller for her hard work and inspiration.

Through the Summer, in partnership with Onside, we facilitated two Healthy Living courses. The groups learnt about healthy eating and exercise. Thank you Luan Wall for your enthusiasm and positivity.

Again the gardening project has proved a great success with more vegetables produced as well as wooden planters and two potting tables.

This will be my last Manager's report as I will be retiring at the end of next March 2023. I have worked with the organisation, in various roles since 1986, so it will be a big change for me. However, I am sure I will keep in touch, by popping in to the Coffee Morning or perhaps staying fit at the Zumba class!

I would like to say a big thank you to Caroline, Cat, Selina and Kat. You really are amazing, it's incredible what is achieved with such a small team!

Thank you also to our committed and loyal board of Trustees. I am excited to report we also have three new Trustees joining us at the AGM - Janet, Vikki and Murray, it will be great to have you on board.

Catherine Quekett—Manager

Who's who at Our Way Self Advocacy

Staff



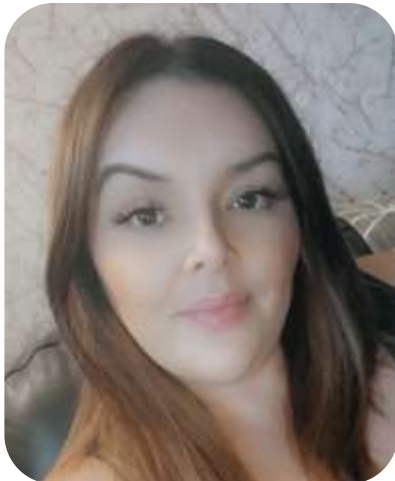
Catherine Quekett
Manager



Caroline
Development Worker
(Stars)
(Young People)



Cat Bennett
Development Worker
(Housing)
(Young People)



Selina Tipper
Administrator



Katrina Pannell
Youth Worker

Board of Trustees 2021- 2022



Ray Gallier
(Chairman)



Linda Bullock
(Secretary)



Alison Price



John Lawley



Sue Houghton



Beth Craven



Carolyn Ayres



Aimee Smith

Message from the Chair

It's been a much better year, now that we are free from the lockdowns, with lots of face to face fun activities.

I particularly enjoyed the London sightseeing trip. It was only my second visit to London and it was good to see famous places in real life.

Also the Jubilee themed Summer Ball was a special occasion as we hadn't had one for two years because of Covid. The buffet was very tasty and the Blinding Lights band was excellent!

I have enjoyed being Chair of Trustees this year and would like to thank the board members for their time and enthusiasm.

Alison Price and Aimee Smith have decided to step down as Trustees and I would like to thank them for their involvement. I am looking forward to working with Vikki, Janet and Murray—our three new Trustees.

I would like to thank the trustees, staff and volunteers for all their hard work and commitment.

Ray Gallier
Chair of Trustees

Volunteers



Linda Bullock



Carolyn Ayres



Ben Bennett



Julia Tacey



Michelle Martin



Gary Martin



Becci Wykes



Nick Clark



Adam Mytton



Kevin Eades



George Mytton



Marsha White

Self Advocacy Groups

The Wednesday night Self Advocacy Group has continued to meet, enjoying some deep discussions, arts and crafts, cooking, bingo, games and karaoke.



Ladies' and Men's Group

Our Way Ladies' and Men's groups have met monthly, getting together to talk about chosen topics and enjoying activities.



Young People's Group

The Young People's group have had a busy year. All activities have been face to face.

Monday night sessions have provided opportunities for young people to meet with their friends and to share and take part in lots of pursuits such as cooking, gaming and arts and crafts.

During the school holidays we have organised a variety of visits, including days out to different attractions such as the lazar tag, bowling, indoor golf, football golf and archery.

Young People from Wyre Forest School and Russell House have enjoyed multi-sports on a Thursday afternoon at Youth House.

(Funded by BBC Children in Need)



West Midlands Self Advocacy Network

Another busy year for the West Midlands Self Advocacy Network looking at and raising issues of importance, Health, friendships, employment and human rights. Link Workers Matt and Stuart have consulted with Our Way members, organisations and professionals gathering information, experiences and thoughts.



Members of the Network at a meeting at Youth House

BILD for the Future

John and Lara have been part of BILD for the future's monthly meetings taking part and contributing to topical debates and discussions.



The Housing Project

The Housing project has been busy this year, both supporting people with moves and supporting with their housing needs in various other capacities.

We have had 10 new referrals, most of whom have approached us having heard about the housing project through other people. We have completed and stepped back from providing housing support to 25 people, ensuring that they have the right support in place and knowing they can always come back to us, if they are unsure about anything.

This leaves us currently working with 16 people. One person has come back to the housing project, for support with a second move. The first move was into supported accommodation from their parents house and now, following a very successful period there, building their confidence and life skills, they are ready to move on, into independent living with minimal support. The person has been recently engaged and has brought their partner to the office to plan their move in together.

We have supported two people buying their own flats, one through the shared ownership scheme, having lived there for a number of years they got to a point where they were able to take on a mortgage and buy the remaining share. The second was a private tenancy. The landlord had decided to sell the flat, and we supported the tenant to get a mortgage and buy it!

Here is a quote from one satisfied family 'I can't believe how grateful we are to Our Way Kidderminster. The organisation is amazing, the help we have received was exceptional! The process of moving our young person into new accommodation has been made so easy because of the knowledge and experience they provide.'



Georgia at her new home in Kidderminster



Sylvia and Frances at their new flat in Evesham

Stars in the Sky

All our activities have been face-to-face this year, including climbing, fishing, bowling, cooking, multi sports, Summer Ball and a trip to London.



Trip to London



Cooking session



Climbing wall



Multi-sports



Fishing



Lazar Tag

Stars in the Sky Continued

Throughout the year Our Way members have again enjoyed walks across Worcestershire., including Kinver Caves, Sanders Park in Bromsgrove, Burlish Top, Habberley Valley, Hartlebury Common, Springfield Park, The Lido Park in Droitwich, Malvern Hills and Bodenham Arboretum.



Kinver Caves



Bodenham



Brinton Park



Habberley Valley



Sanders Park



Burlish Top



Birmingham Zoo



Springfield Park
and Canal

Gardening Project

There are always jobs to be done in the garden. Throughout the year members have been kept busy planting and caring for plants growing in the garden. Woodwork skills have been learnt and used to create raised beds and planters. Thank you to KDYT for their continued support and providing us with this outside space.



Art Project

Barbara Miller helped our members discover their creative side, with workshops at Youth House and in the Wyre Forest. The course finished with an excellent exhibition at Kidderminster Town Hall.



Our Way Sports

Wyre Forest Leisure centre has been the venue for weekly Sunday morning training sessions. Players of mixed ages and abilities have been able to add to and learn new footballing skills whilst enjoying some friendly but competitive football. Big thank to our team of coaches Adam, Kevin, Beth and George.

Galaxy Stars played in The All Ability 3 Counties League and were awarded the Fair Play title for 2021/22 season.



Football training at Wyre Forest Leisure Centre

Safe Place Scheme

With the lifting of Covid restrictions we have been able to revisit and update Worcestershire Safe places. Thank you Safe Places volunteers, shops and businesses who have supported us and signed up to this scheme.



Keeping Safe

Being and feeling safe continues to be a high priority for Our Way members. During the year we have been able to promote this by holding keeping safe and hate crime workshops. In October we attended the North Worcester Hate Crime Conference.

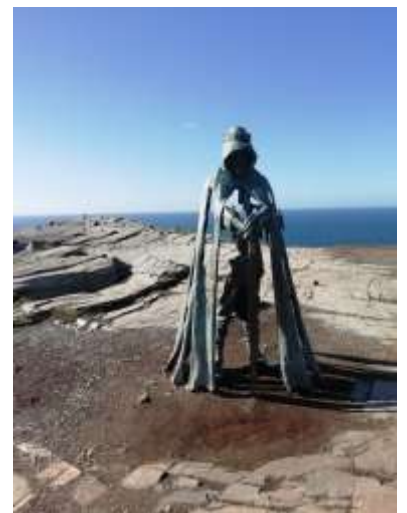
Thursday Coffee Morning

Our Thursday morning coffee mornings are very well attended. Members chat, play cards or dominos, bring their crafts and colouring and have a pleasant social time together.



Photography Group

Our Photography Club members have been busy this year. Each week we have a theme to share our favourite pictures. We share them on our Snappers Messenger group. We have had two masterclass sessions from Donna Lawson who is a professional photographer. Here are some of the group's favourite photos.



Support Work

The one-to-one support that we have offered has flourished over the years with more of our members requesting our support with household tasks, appointments, correspondence, meetings and more.

Healthy Living Course

In partnership with Onside Advocacy we facilitated a Healthy Living Course. Luan Wall helped two groups learn about how making small changes can make a big difference. We learnt about healthy eating, how our mood affects what we eat and ways to exercise, including a lively boxing session!. Everyone was weighed and measured at the beginning of the course and everyone had lost weight and inches by the end. It's been great to see members carry on using what they learnt after the course , to continue losing weight and get fitter.



DY10 Nightclub

This year we have high numbers of members attending our DY10 night club sessions. We saw the return of themed evenings—including 80s night, Halloween and Fancy Dress.



Summer Ball

After a two year wait for a Summer Ball, members had a great night out at Kidderminster Town Hall.





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Supported by

